

Mr. Jones. There's a big difference.

The President. Yes, there is. Anyway, thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to TV host and fisherman Charlie Pack.

Remarks Following Discussions With King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa of Bahrain

March 25, 2008

President Bush. Your Majesty, welcome back to Washington. It is such a pleasure to see you. I still have such fond memories of our trip to the Kingdom of Bahrain. His Majesty and I were reminiscing about the sword dance that you put on. It was spectacular. And you've got a—not only do you have a beautiful country, but you've got a prosperous country and a country that is a great friend of the United States. It's just such a honor to welcome you back here.

We had a good discussion—and we'll continue our discussion over lunch—on a variety of subjects. First, I do want to thank the Kingdom for sending an ambassador to Iraq. That's a very strong move that indicates a willingness to lead, as well as a willingness to send a signal that when a young democracy like Iraq is beginning to make progress, that it is important for the neighborhood to recognize that progress. And I really do want to thank Your Majesty for that.

We talked about security measures, the need to work together on joint security operations. I congratulated His Majesty on Bahrain's leadership of a joint task force that's—that is enabling nations to learn how to work together in order to keep the peace.

All in all, it's been what you would expect: a visit that's cordial and comfortable and amongst friends. And so, Your Majesty, welcome back, and thank you for coming.

King Hamad. Thank you. Thank you. I would like to thank the President for his kind invitation and his great support to Bahrain and to the stability and prosperity of our region.

And concerning sending back ambassador—an ambassador to Iraq, Iraq is an

Arab state. Iraq is a founder of the Arab League, so it deserves all the support that it can get from other brother Arabs.

And the discussion today focused on bilateral relations concerning the free trade agreement, which we have signed, and concerning the energy as well, which yesterday was signed by the Secretary of State and our Foreign Minister. And we talked about security matters, which really are the most important issue for maintaining the development and the prosperity in our region.

And I came all the way to thank the President for what he has done for Bahrain and for our region and for the whole world—stability and security in fighting terrorism and extremism. And we hope we achieve our common goals by having a stable world.

So thank you, Mr. President. Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Majesty. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. King Hamad referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Khalid bin Ahmad al-Khalifa of Bahrain.

Remarks at a Celebration of Greek Independence Day

March 25, 2008

Thank you. Your Eminence, thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. I'm always open for a few suggestions. [Laughter] You're an easy man to listen to.

And I want to thank you all for coming. Here we are to celebrate the 187th anniversary of Greek independence. And it's an interesting place to celebrate it, isn't it? You know, the White House is a great symbol for independence and freedom and liberty. And it's a fitting place to celebrate the independence of Greece.

Mr. Minister, thank you for coming. We appreciate you coming all the way over for this event, and we're proud you're here. And thanks for bringing your son.

Mr. Ambassador, thanks for coming. Ambassador Mallias is with us today. Mr. Ambassador—there you are, right there, Ambassador. Thank you. It's good to see your wife. Appreciate you all being here. Ambassador